

# Child Welfare by the Numbers in 2010



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Unless otherwise noted, data is for calendar 2010

## **Assessments, abuse findings**

- 26,413 assessments for child abuse in calendar 2010, up 2 percent from 2009. Of those:
  - ✓ 17,432 (two-thirds of all assessments) no finding of abuse. Percentage of “no abuse” findings is similar year after year.
  - ✓ 6,794 ‘founded’ abuses, down from 7,011 in ‘09, compares to 6,141 in ‘08, 7,096 in ‘07, and 7,941 in ‘06.
  - ✓ 2,187 ‘confirmed’ abuses (minor and isolated, perpetrator not placed on registry), compares to 1,856 in ‘09.
- 9,908 children were subject of ‘founded’ abuse (10,148 in ‘09, 8,779 in ‘08, 10,358 in ‘07, 11,263 in ‘06)
- 2,687 children were subject of ‘confirmed’ abuse, compares to 2,294 in ‘09.
- 51 percent of abused or neglected children were age 5 or younger (similar to past years).
- Of all abuses in calendar 2010:
  - ✓ 81 percent was neglect (denial of critical care), similar number for several years.
  - ✓ 9 percent was physical, same as ‘09, 11 percent in ‘08.
  - ✓ 3.3 percent was sexual, down from slightly less than 4 percent in ‘09 and ‘08.
  - ✓ 4.3 percent was presence of illegal drugs in body, up from 3.7 percent in ‘09, 3.9 percent in ‘08.

## **Assessing abuse, caseload**

Allegations of abuse, called intakes, are screened by a central intake unit in Des Moines. Accepted intakes are investigated by county-based DHS assessors. When abuse is founded, a separate group of DHS social workers supervise the ongoing care and services for children and their families. Those services are performed by non-government social service agencies under performance contracts. The monthly average DHS caseload in 2009:

- ✓ 200 DHS assessors, down from 222 in ‘09, were assigned an average of 12.5 new cases a month, up from 11 in ‘09.
- ✓ 385 DHS social work case managers, down from 449 in ‘09, had an average child welfare caseload of 27. In addition to supervising services, a goal for these workers is to visit every child and every child’s parents every month. These workers also perform adult services, home studies, etc.

## **Highlights, results of Iowa’s child-welfare redesign launched in 2005, 2006**

- Require consistent assessments based on risk, age, and severity of abuse. Focus on children with highest risk.
- Provide optional, free, and “non-DHS” help for families where re-abuse risk is low.
- Focus on best-practice results (lowering rates of re-abuse, increasing rate of speedy reunification, etc.).
- Boost service for older foster youth. Program for “aged out” youth serves hundreds.
- Transparent results. <https://dhssecure.dhs.state.ia.us/digitaldashboard/> In quarter ending 12/10:
  - ✓ 91 percent of all abused or neglected children were abuse-free in following six months.
  - ✓ 99.8 percent of abused or neglected children placed in foster care remained safe from abuse.
  - ✓ 86.4 percent of reunified children did not re-enter foster care within a year.
- Engage families in plan for improvement, especially via family team meetings and parent mentors.
- Keep once-abused children at home if safe to do so. 80 percent of abused children remained in the family home with the support of services in 2010.

## **The cost of child welfare: FY10 actual expenditures**

Major Services	State dollars	All other dollars	Total*	Average Monthly Number Served (FY10)
Family centered services	- \$ 4.6	\$23.5	\$28.1	4,956 families served (at least one child per family)
Family foster care	- \$11.4	\$10.8	\$22.2	2,257 children in formal (not relative) foster care
Group care	- \$21.4	\$ 9.0	\$30.4	867 children in highly structured group settings
Adoption subsidies	- \$31.0	\$35.0	\$66.0	9,016 (subsidies paid until adopted child reaches 18)
Aged-out program (PAL)	- \$ 3.4	\$ 0.0	\$ 3.4	307 aged-out youth receiving stipends, counseling
Shelter care	- \$ 7.7	\$ 1.3	\$ 9.0	179 children served in average month
DHS social workers	- \$27.7	\$33.6	\$61.3	* millions